

VZCZCXRO4071  
OO RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHROV RUEHSR  
DE RUEHPG #0434 1151518  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 251518Z APR 06  
FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7261  
INFO RHMFISS/CDR USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 1729  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0130  
RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 000434

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/NCE, PM/RSAT FOR DOWLEY

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/24/2016

TAGS: [NATO](#) [MARR](#) [PREL](#) [EZ](#)

SUBJECT: CZECHS AGREE THAT KOSOVO INDEPENDENCE IS INEVITABLE

REF: STATE 59894

Classified By: Acting DCM Michael Dodman for reasons  
1.4 (b) & (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: The Czech Republic agrees that independence for Kosovo is an inevitability. The GOCR believes UN Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari must make more rapid progress if he is to have any chance of completing his work within the envisaged timeframe. They believe the hope of EU accession will not be sufficient to entice the Serbs into a more cooperative frame of mind. End Summary.

¶2. (C) ADCM April 24 discussed reftel demarche on U.S. Kosovo policy with Tomas Szunyog, Director of the MFA's Eastern Europe Division. Szunyog welcomed the demarche, saying that the Czech Republic sometimes felt that there could be more transparency from members of the Contact Group and that this message was exactly the kind of communication that promoted the engagement of the international community. Szunyog said the Czech Republic was one hundred percent in agreement with the U.S. position, including on the inevitability of independence for Kosovo. He wondered what kind of limitations on independence might be debated in the future, believing that there might be calls for modified independence which might feature restrictions on a Kosovo military force, and prohibitions on Kosovo merging with a neighboring country.

¶3. (C) On the political front, Szunyog saw positive signs in Prime Minister Ceku's statements on minorities. While deeds were not always encouraging, words such as these were a positive step. Szunyog reiterated the long-standing Czech policy that protection of minority rights must be a key element of any final solution.

¶4. (C) Szunyog said his government did not see a need for a Bosnia-like strong civilian mission in Kosovo in the future, but recommended continuation of a significant military presence for the foreseeable future. Szunyog said the EU was likely to focus its assistance on areas where it was most comfortable, including justice, home affairs, and economic expertise.

¶5. (C) Szunyog shared that the Austrian Presidency had scheduled a meeting of MFA regional directors for April 26 to discuss Kosovo, a meeting he believed stemmed from EU impatience with the speed of progress being achieved by UN Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari. The end of Ahtisaari's mandate in November meant that all proposals would have to be

ready by late summer. Szunyog believed that the "ground up" approach was the correct one in principle, but felt that the results must now be transformed into a document for examination by all parties, including the Contact Group. He recognized that such an approach carried the risk of creating a solution that was unacceptable to the Kosovars, the Serbs, or both, but he felt that the need for progress made the risk worthwhile. Any document would have to fully incorporate the principles of the Contact Group. In a worst-case scenario it would be possible that the international community might have to impose a plan. Szunyog also believed that the Serbian leadership would favor a 20-year process rather than a quick resolution of the Kosovo issue. He cautioned that the lure of eventual EU membership for Serbia should not be overestimated. Under the most optimistic of timelines Serbian membership of the EU would take place in 10-15 years, making it politically useless to Serb politicians seeking voter support.

6 (C) Comment: Martti Ahtisaari will visit Prague May 19 to meet with Prime Minister Jiri Paroubek. Paroubek personally favors dismemberment of Kosovo in order to protect Serbs but has decided not to let his personal biases influence his government's more orthodox Kosovo policy. The Czechs plan to stay deeply involved in the region, and will continue to maintain more than half of their worldwide total of deployed troops in Kosovo. End comment.

DODMAN